IN THE CLAIMS:

Cancel 1-8.

Please add the following new claims 9-16:

Claim 9 (new) A factory scale process for producing crystalline atorvastatin trihydrate hemi calcium salt comprising the steps of:

(a) reacting a mixture of atorvastatin lactone, methanol, and methyl *tert*-butyl ether with sodium hydroxide to form the ring-opened sodium salt;

(b) forming a product rich aqueous layer and an organic layer comprising methyl *tert*-butyl ether containing impurities;

(c) removing the organic layer comprising methyl *tert*-butyl ether containing impurities;

(d) extracting the product rich aqueous layer with methyl *tert*-butyl ether ;

(e) adding an extra charge of methyl *tert*-butyl ether to a vessel containing the product rich aqueous layer in an amount of at least 1% w/v of the contents of the vessel;

(f) sealing the reaction vessel;

(g) heating the contents of the sealed reaction vessel to 47°C to 57°C in the presence of the extra charge of methyl *tert*-butyl ether which saturates the crystallization matrix on heating;

(h) adding calcium acetate hemihydrate to the sealed reaction vessel and shortly after commencement of the calcium acetate addition the transfer is stopped and the reaction mixture is seeded with crystalline atorvastatin calcium to form atorvastatin trihydrate hemi calcium salt;

(i) providing a vacuum pan dryer having an agitator; and

(j) drying the isolated product in a vacuum pan dryer whilst continuously rotating the agitator at a speed of from 0.5 rpm to 2 rpm.

Claim 10 (new) The process as claimed in Claim 9 comprising continuously rotating the agitator at a speed of approximately 1 rpm

Claim 11 (new) The process as claimed in Claim 9 comprising maintaining vacuum in the pan dryer at a pressure of from -0.80 to -0.99 bar.

Claim 12 (new) The process as claimed in Claim 10 comprising maintaining vacuum in the pan dryer at a pressure of from -0.80 to -0.99 bar.

Claim 13 (new) The process as claimed in Claim 9 comprising drying the isolated product over a period of from 1 to 4 days.

Claim 14 (new) The process as claimed in Claim 10 comprising drying the isolated product over a period of from 1 to 4 days.

Claim 15 (new) The process as claimed in Claim 9 comprising drying the isolated product over a period of from 1 to 2 days.

Claim 16 (new) The process as claimed in Claim 10 comprising drying the isolated product over a period of from 1 to 2 days.